

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A license management apparatus on a customer side, which makes a license agreement of software and/or a use apparatus that installs the software, comprising:

report information storage means for storing report information that pertains to the license agreement;

elapsed time measurement means for detecting an elapse of a predetermined term, and outputting detection information; and

report information output means for automatically sending the report information as use information to a predetermined destination in response to the detection information input from the elapsed time measurement means.

2. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the report information that pertains to the license agreement is apparatus use information indicating that the use apparatus is in use.

3. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the report information that pertains to the license agreement is software use information indicating that the use apparatus has installed the software.

4. An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the software use information contains version information of the software.

5. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the use apparatus is a personal computer.

6. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the use apparatus is a vehicle such as a passenger vehicle, motorbike, auto truck, and the like, and said report information output means includes a radio device.

7. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the use apparatus is a home electric appliance such as a television receiver, refrigerator, or the like.

8. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said report information output means includes transmission/reception means connected to one of a radio line, telephone line, Internet, and intranet.

9. An apparatus according to claim 8, further comprising a license alert processing device connected to said transmission/reception means.

10. An apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said license alert processing device generates alert display information upon receiving an alert command via said transmission/reception means.

11. A license management apparatus comprising:
report information storage means for storing report information that pertains to a license agreement from a plurality of use apparatuses under management;

elapsed time measurement means for detecting

an elapse of a predetermined term, and outputting
detection information; and

5 report information output means for automatically
 sending the report information as use information to a
 predetermined destination in response to the detection
 information input from the elapsed time measurement
 means.

10 12. An apparatus according to claim 11, wherein
 said report information storage means is connected to
 the plurality of use apparatuses under the management
 via communication means, and stores report information
 that pertains to the license agreement of each use
 apparatus.

15 13. An apparatus according to claim 12, wherein
 said report information output means sends the number
 of the plurality of use apparatuses under the
 management as the use information when said report
 information output means outputs the report
 information as the use information.

20 14. An apparatus according to claim 12, wherein
 said report information output means sends the number
 of copies of software installed in the plurality of
 use apparatuses under the management as the use
 information when said report information output means
25 outputs the report information as the use information.

 15. An apparatus according to claim 11, wherein
 the use apparatus is a personal computer.

sends key information to the use apparatus only when
the contents satisfy an update condition.

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